

## Article - Education

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§7-101.1.

(a) (1) In this section the following terms have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Economically disadvantaged background” means a family whose income would make a child eligible for free or reduced price meals if the child were in kindergarten.

(3) “Eligible child” means a child:

(i) Who is from an economically disadvantaged background;

(ii) Whose parent or guardian seeks to enroll the child in a public prekindergarten program; and

(iii) Who is 4 years old on September 1 of the school year in which the parent or legal guardian seeks to enroll the child in a public prekindergarten program.

(4) “Eligible for free or reduced price meals” means eligible for free or reduced price meals based on eligibility requirements established by the United States Department of Agriculture.

(b) By the 2007–2008 school year, all eligible children shall be admitted free of charge to publicly funded prekindergarten programs established by each of the county boards.

(c) (1) A local department of social services or a local health department shall provide a parent or guardian with an oral and written notice that their child may be eligible for publicly funded prekindergarten programs if the parent or guardian:

(i) Applied for economic services with the local department of social services or the local health department; and

(ii) Has a child who will be 4 years old on September 1 of the next academic year.

(2) The notice required under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall include contact information for the enrollment office of the local school system and the Division of Early Childhood Development in the Department.

(3) On or before December 1 of each year, each local department of social services and each local health department shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on the number of parents who were given a notification and subsequently enrolled their child in a publicly funded prekindergarten program.

(d) The requirements set forth in § 7–101(b) of this subtitle regarding the domicile of a child and the residency of the child’s parent or guardian shall apply to prekindergarten programs established by county boards as required by this section.

(e) In the comprehensive master plan that is submitted under § 5–401 of this article, a county board shall identify the strategies that will be used in that county to ensure that publicly funded prekindergarten programs are available to all eligible children in that county by the 2007–2008 school year.

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